

BRIGHTER FUTURES

Environmental & Sustainability Policy



Brighter Futures Environmental & Sustainability Policy

Approved by: Chief Officer

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Purpose

Brighter Futures recognises that its activities have an impact on the environment and is committed to reducing negative environmental impacts wherever reasonably practicable while continuing to deliver accessible, affordable and effective services for the community.

We will seek to use resources responsibly, prevent pollution, reduce waste, improve energy efficiency and make a positive contribution to the local environment.

Scope

This policy applies to Brighter Futures' premises, activities, projects, vehicles and operations.

Trustees, employees and volunteers are expected to support the principles of this policy when carrying out activities on behalf of Brighter Futures. Contractors and suppliers will also be encouraged to support these principles where appropriate.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Brighter Futures will comply with applicable environmental legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to its activities.

This includes meeting applicable Welsh workplace recycling requirements and our legal duty of care in relation to waste.

Where licences, registrations, exemptions or authorised waste contractors are required for an activity, Brighter Futures will ensure the appropriate arrangements are in place.

Energy and Water

Brighter Futures will seek to minimise unnecessary energy and water use while maintaining a safe, comfortable and accessible environment for everyone using our facilities.

We will monitor energy use where practicable, maintain energy-efficient equipment appropriately and consider energy efficiency when repairing or replacing equipment.

Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to switch off lights, heating, electrical equipment and water supplies when they are not required, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Environmental improvements to our building will be considered alongside safety, affordability, accessibility, maintenance requirements and the needs of our service users.

Waste and Recycling

Brighter Futures will apply the waste hierarchy by seeking first to prevent waste, then to reuse materials where appropriate, followed by recycling or other recovery before disposal.

Waste will be stored safely and securely and separated for recycling in accordance with current Welsh workplace recycling requirements.

Appropriate arrangements will be maintained for the separate collection of recyclable materials and food waste where legally required.

Waste will only be transferred to appropriately authorised contractors or facilities. Relevant contracts, waste transfer documentation and other records will be retained as required.

Hazardous or specialist waste, including relevant electrical equipment, batteries, chemicals or similar materials, will be stored and disposed of using appropriate arrangements.

Reuse of Materials and Resources

Brighter Futures encourages safe and appropriate reuse of materials as part of its community activities.

Where suitable, materials such as timber may be reused for community projects including planters, garden furniture, bird boxes, insect habitats and similar projects.

Materials will only be reused where they are suitable and safe for their intended purpose, and any applicable waste-management requirements will be followed.

Where new timber or other materials are required, Brighter Futures will seek responsibly sourced materials where reasonably practicable and affordable.

Food and Catering

Brighter Futures will seek to minimise food waste through appropriate purchasing, storage, preparation and use of surplus food resources.

Where food waste reaches the threshold requiring separate collection under Welsh workplace recycling requirements, suitable arrangements will be maintained for its separation and collection.

Food safety requirements will always take priority when considering the reuse or redistribution of food.

Purchasing and Supplies

We will seek to avoid unnecessary purchasing and will consider durability, repairability, reuse, recycled content, packaging and environmental impact when making purchasing decisions where reasonably practicable.

Single-use products will be reduced where suitable alternatives are practical, safe and affordable.

Environmental considerations will be balanced against quality, accessibility, value for money and the charitable use of Brighter Futures' resources.

Transport and Community Fleet

Brighter Futures recognises that its vehicles provide an important service to the local community while also creating an environmental impact.

Vehicles will be appropriately maintained to support safety, reliability and efficient operation.

We will seek to reduce unnecessary journeys, plan journeys efficiently and discourage unnecessary engine idling.

When vehicles are replaced, Brighter Futures will consider fuel efficiency and lower-emission alternatives alongside accessibility, operational requirements, purchase and running costs, available infrastructure and the needs of the community organisations using the fleet.

Preventing Pollution

Brighter Futures will take reasonable steps to prevent pollution of land, air, drains and water.

Chemicals, fuels, oils, paints and other potentially polluting materials will be stored and used appropriately.

Any environmental incident or significant spill will be dealt with promptly and reported to the appropriate person and, where necessary, the relevant authority.

Positive Environmental Impact

Brighter Futures will continue to support projects that improve the local environment and encourage community involvement.

These may include community gardening, growing fruit and vegetables, creating wildlife habitats, improving community spaces, reuse and repair activities and environmental awareness projects.

Where practicable, projects will seek to benefit local wildlife and biodiversity as well as the wider community.

Responsibilities and Monitoring

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that Brighter Futures operates responsibly and complies with its legal obligations.

Day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy will be delegated to the appropriate manager or designated person.

Staff and volunteers should report environmental concerns, waste-management issues, pollution incidents or opportunities for improvement to the appropriate person.

Brighter Futures will periodically consider its energy use, waste and recycling arrangements, vehicle use, resource consumption and environmental projects to identify realistic opportunities for improvement.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by Brighter Futures and approved by the Board of Trustees or Chief Officer.

It will also be reviewed sooner where there is a significant change to legislation, premises, services, vehicles or other activities that may affect our environmental responsibilities.